



NEWS RELEASE

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

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CROP PRODUCTION DOWN IN 2012 DUE TO DROUGHT, USDA REPORTS *Winter Wheat Seedings and Grain Stocks are also Reported*

WASHINGTON, Jan. 11, 2013 – Despite getting off to a very favorable start, U.S. growers spent the summer of 2012 battling historic drought conditions in much of the Midwest. As a result, corn and soybean production, both key U.S. crops, is significantly down in 2012, according to the *Crop Production 2012 Annual Summary* released today by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS).

U.S. corn growers produced 10.8 billion bushels, 13 percent below the 2011 crop. The corn yield in 2012 is estimated at 123.4 bushels per acre, down from 147.2 yield in 2011. For these growers, the spring of 2012 looked like the beginning of a banner year. With favorable conditions, farmers planted at the fastest pace in U.S. history and planted the largest acreage in the past 75 years. But historic drought conditions in most of the corn-growing states caused the corn crop conditions to decline rapidly. As of July 29, only 24 percent of the corn acreage was rated good to excellent, compared to 62 percent rated in these two categories at the same time in 2011.

Soybean production for 2012 totaled 3.01 billion bushels, down 3 percent from 2011 crop. Despite the decrease, this was still the seventh largest soybean crop on record. The U.S. yield is estimated at 39.6 bushels, which is 2.3 bushels below last year's yield. While soybean growers in the Corn Belt faced similar struggles as the corn growers, farmers in other states saw much improved conditions from 2011 when soybean production was hampered by spring flooding.

For 2012, all cotton production is up 9 percent from the previous year, at 17.0 million 480-pound bales. The U.S. yield is estimated at 866 pounds per acre, up 76 pounds from last year's yield. Harvested area, at 9.43 million acres, is down fractionally from last year.

Sorghum grain production in 2012 saw a major upturn and is estimated at 247 million bushels, up 15 percent from 2011. Sorghum average yield was 49.8 bushels per acre, up 4.8 bushel from last year. Area planted for sorghum, at 6.24 million acres, is up 14 percent from last year. Harvested area, at 4.96 million acres, is up 26 percent from 2011.

Production of other crops declined as well. As an example, U.S. production of all dry hay is estimated at 120 million tons, this is the lowest level since 1964.

Also released today were the Winter Wheat Seedings and Grain Stocks, reports. The Winter Wheat Seedings report is the first indicator of this year's wheat acreage. Planted area for harvest in 2013 is estimated at 41.8 million acres, up 1 percent from 2012 and 3 percent above 2011. More acres were seeded this year due to the early row crop harvest.

In the Grain Stocks report, corn and soybean stocks were both estimated to be down 17 percent from 2011. Corn stocks stored both on- and off-farm totaled 8.03 billion bushels, while soybeans totaled 197 billion bushels.

The full *Crop Production 2012 Summary* and all other reports released today are available online at www.nass.usda.gov. The *Crop Production 2012 Summary* contains year-end acreage, yield and production estimates for grains and hay; oilseeds; cotton, tobacco and sugar; dry beans, peas and lentils; and potatoes and miscellaneous crops. Also released today at noon are Winter Wheat Seedings, Grain Stocks, Rice Stocks, Cotton Ginnings and monthly Crop Production reports.

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